THE

Religious Villain.

A

SERMON

Preached before the Right Honourable

Sr. ROBERT CLAYTON, Kt.

LORD MAYOR

OF

LONDON

AND THE

Court of Aldermen.

Upon the Fifth day of *November*, 1679. being the Anniversary day of Thanksgiving for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation from the Hellish Powder-Treason,

At St. *Mary le Bow* Church, in *London*.

By *FRANCIS GREGORY*, D. D. And Rector of *Hambleton* in the County of *Bucks*, and late one of his Majesties Chaplaines in Ordinary.

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Religious Villain.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sr. ROBERT CLAYTON Kt.
And Lord Mayor of the City of London.

My Lord,

THis *discourse, which was first designed for the only use of that* little Village, *wherein the Providence of God hath placed* me, *as* Rector; *and your* Lordship, *as* Patron; *hath lately had the Privilege, through your* Honours favour *and* Order, *to be delivered in a* City-Church, *though with some* disadvantageous Circumstances.

For that Church *being* spacious, *the* occasion Solemn, *and the* Assembly *not only very* numerous, *but much* disturbed *too*, *the inarticulate* noise *of* many, *through* Catarrhes *and* Coughs, *drowning the* Voice *of* one; *the* Preacher *had the fate rather to be* seen *than* heard; *and it so fell out, that the* greater *the* Congregation *was, the* Auditory *proved so much the* less.

Such, as had the luck to hear *some* part *of this Sermon from the* Pulpit, *have importuned me to let them* see *the* whole *of it from the* Press; *whose requests I should never have gratified, had I not some hopes, that a subject, so* seasonable *for the* Juncture *of time, may do some good.*

And the more good will this Paper do, if your Lord-

ship

ſhip pleaſe to Shelter *it under your* Wing. *For, ſuch a* ſignal, juſt, *and* deſerved *Veneration hath this whole* Royal City *for your* Honour, *that every man, who is wiſe and good, will eaſily entertain whatever ſhall be recommended to them by your* Lordſhips Counſel, Example, *or* Approbation.

And ſince, not only the Citizens *of* London, *but the* whole Nation *is highly ſatisfied, that in the Government of this great* Metropolis, *your* Lordſhip *doth as* little deſign, *as* need, *the Advancement of your* private Intereſt; *but, the* ſecurity *of our* Religion, *the* Honour *and* ſafety *of our* Soveraign, *the* Eſtabliſhment *of our* Church, *the* reſtitution *of* Peace *and* Unity, *and the* prevention *of* Popiſh ſuperſtitions *and* Tyranny, *I can with the greater confidence recommended this diſcourſe to your* Lordſhips *Patronage, as having in it a direct Tendency towards all thoſe bleſſed* Ends, *which your* Honour *aimes at.*

May our good God *ſo bleſs your* Lordſhips Perſon *with* Health, *and your* Government *with thoſe* happy events, *which your* Honour *deſignes, that* Vice *and* Errour *may be* ſuppreſſed, *that* Religion *and* Vertue *may be* advanced, *that all our unhappy* differences *may be* reconciled, *that the* Citizens *of* London *may be preſerved from* Sword *and* Peſtilence, *and the* City *it ſelf from future* Flames!

That it may ſo be is the deſign of this diſcourſe, and ſhall for ever be both the endeavor *and dayly* Petition *of*

Your Lordſhips moſt obliged
Friend and humble Servant,

F. G.

THE RELIGIOUS VILLAIN.

A SERMON PREACHED Upon the 5th. of *November.*

Joh. 16. 2.

They shall put you out of their Synagogues; yea, the time comes, that whosoever kills you, will think that he doth God Service.

THEY *shall put you out of their Synagogues*, That would be the work of the *Jewes*, both by there *Niddui*, and their *Cheem*, their lesser Excommunication and their greater; even that whereby the offender was not only ἀφορισμὸς, excluded both from the Sacred and Civil *assemblies* of men, but Καθαιρεσμὸς so-

solemnly devoted to the Wrath and *Curse* of *God*.

But that's not all; such an Excommuni-
Tert. in Apol. cation, as *Tertullian* styles, *summum judicii futuri Præjudicium*, the greatest Essay, Emblem, and representation of the last Judgement, was thought a punishment too gentle for the Primitive Saints; for thus the Text goeth on, every one that kills you, this *every one* takes in the *Gentiles* too; and why both *Jew* and *Gentile* would thus conspire against the Servants of Christ, their Lord gives them this account, *They will think that they do God service*, and that it so fell out indeed according to this Prediction, and what were the grounds of these gross misapprehensions about our Saviours innocent Servants, give me leave to shew you, by way of History, in these four distinct particulars.

First, The Servants of Christ, though men of exemplary Piety, were yet accused and and thought guilty of the highest *Irreligion* and *Atheism*; and upon that score, were judged worthy to die.

The Jewes esteemed them Enemies to

their

their Law, Temple, and Worſhip; with this they charged St. *Stephen*. *This man ceaſeth not to ſpeak blaſphemous words againſt this holy place, and the Law.* This was St. *Paul's* Indictment too, *This is the man, that teacheth all men every where againſt the People, the Law, and this Place.* Act. 6. 13. Act. 21. 28.

And as the *Jews* did count them Enemies to their Religion, ſo did the *Gentiles* think them to have either *none* or that which is worſe then *none*. Some indeed accuſed them, as *Minucius Felix* tells us, *quòd monſtra colerent*, that they worſhipped Monſters, *Onochelen*, ſaith *Tertullian*, a certain Mongrel with Ears like an Aſs, ſo *Celius Rhodiginus*. Minuc. F. in Oct. p. 23. Cel. Rhod. l. 21. cap. 24.

But as to thoſe many Deities, which the Pagan World did then acknowledge and adore, the Heathens in *Tertullian* do charge the Chriſtians thus, *Deos non colitis*, ye worſhip not our Gods. So he in *Minucius Felix*, *nullas aras habent Chriſtiani, Templa nulla*, Theſe Chriſtians have no Altars, no Temples. And as they had none of their own, ſo neither would they worſhip in any of theirs; for the main thing, which *Pliny* wrote to *Trajane* againſt them, was Tert. in Apol. c. 10. Plin. in Ep. ad Trajanum.

this, *obſtinatio non Sacrificandi*, their obſtinate refuſal to offer Sacrifice.

But yet there were exhibited againſt them by other men far greater Complaints then this bare denial of Worſhip, *Graſſantur in Deos*, ſo the Pagans in *Minucius Felix*; theſe Chriſtians do not only *neglect* our Gods, but they *affront* them too; what they did, that Author tells us, *Templa deſpiciunt, ſacra rident*, they diſpiſe our Temples, they laugh at our Sacrifices, Καθοσιόυσι τὰ μυστήρια, ſaith *Socrates*, they Scoffe at our holy Myſteries; nay more ναοὺς καὶ ξόανα καθαιροῦσιν ſaith *Sozomen*; they have demoliſhed our Temples, and pulled down the Images of our Gods; but what did they with them? the Images of Braſs, μετεχωνευτήριον ἐποίησε, ſo *Socrates*, They turned them into *Pots* and *Kettles* for common uſes; and ſuch as were of Silver, ἐχρήσατο χρήματα δημόσια, they melted and turned them into mony, as *Sozomen* doth inform us.

Socr. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 16.

And ſince the *Chriſtians* did thus highly *affront* all thoſe Deities, whom the *Pagan* World did own and worſhip, well might *Arnobius* ſay of himſelf and others, *Athei nuncupamur*, we are called *Atheiſts*; and what then? Ἄθεοι τοίνυν ἀθέοις ſo the Pagans in *Euſebius*, away

Arnob. l. 1. p. 8.

Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 4. cap. 15.

away with these *Atheists*, for, it was no new thing even with *Heathens* to execute an *Atheist*; for, *Plato* tells, that this was the Crime of *Socrates*, ὅτι οὐ νομίζει, he thinks, that there are no Gods, and for that he died. And upon the same supposition of *Atheism*, how false soever it was, did the Heathens think it a very pious work to kill the Christians too. *Plato in Apol. Socr.*

Secondly, The Servants of Christ were thought to be publick *Enemies* to the civil *Government* of the World; and, upon that score, were judged unfit to live any longer in it.

S. *Austine* indeed might well demand, *quid Christiani læserant Regna terrena?* What were the Kingdoms of the World the worse for the Christian faith, that they should prove such enemies to it? certainly, they fared much the better for it; So *Nazianzene* observed τῇ χριστιανῶν πράξει τὰ Ῥωμαίων συνηύξησεν, as the *Christian Religion* thrived, so did the *Roman Empire* too. *Aug. in Psal.* 118. *Nazianz. Orat.* 3. p. 64.

Sure we are the great Author of this Religion did lay no claim to earthly Crowns, *my Kingdome is not of this World.* But, as he gave us his own *Example* of obedience unto other Magistrates, so hath he left us *Rules* and Precepts for it. What the practice of his ancient Servants was, *Tertullian* tells us, *Joh.* 18. 36.

Ora-

Oramus pro omnibus Imperatoribus, &c. We pray for all our Governours, and if at any time they oppress us, our only recourse is to our *Prayers* and *Tears*, not that we want all *other weapons*, or *hands* to use them, but that our Religion gives us no leave to do so.

But notwithstanding all their peaceable deportment and submissive obedience to that *Government*, or rather *Tyranny*, under which they lived and *groaned* too. *Tertullian* thus complains, *Mastajetis rei Convenimur*, we poor Christians are convented and indicted as *Traitors* and *Rebels*; but why so? The Pagans pretences were these, *pro Imperatoribus Sacrificia non impenditis*, ye offer no Sacrifices for the Emperours prosperity; again, *non celebrando solennia Cæsarum*, ye do not observe *Cæsars* birth day with such solemnities, as other Subjects do; yet again, the Christians did refuse to swear, as other Romans commonly did *Per Genios Cæsarum*, or as *Polycarp* was commanded by the Roman *Proconsul* in *Eusebius*, Ὀμοσον τὴν Καίσαρος τύχην, swear by the Fortune of *Cæsar*, this the Christians would not do, and *Tertullian* gives this reason for it, *non dicam Imperatorem Deum*, we dare not *swear* by *Cæsar* because we dare not own him God.

Tert. in Apol. cap. 10.

Euseb. Hist. l. 4. cap. 15.

Now,

Now, their peremptory refusal to flatter the Roman Emperors, in matters of this kind was looked upon as an Argument of their disaffection and disloyalty, which, being improved by the malice of their *accusers*, and believed by their *Judges*, did expose them to the severest censures of the Imperial Laws, as if they had been really guilty of Rebellion and Treasons indeed.

Thirdly, The Servants of Christ were accused and thought guilty of such vile *Immoralities* and foul *debaucheries*, as, being committed, would indeed render any man unfit to live. St. *Austine* tells us, that *Porphyry*, a great enemy to the Primitive Saints, pretended that he had received from an *Oracle* this Information, *Christum piissimum, Christianos pollutos* that Christ himself was a most pious person, but that his pretended followers were polluted Villains. Thus *Tertullian* tells his Pagan, *Hominem Christianum omnium Scelerum reum existimas*, the man, that is a Christian, you think to be guilty of all wickednesses whatsoever. What particular Crimes were laid to the charge of these innocent Christians, we learn from several Authours *Dicimur Sceleratissimi de Sacramento Infanticidii, & Pabulo inde*, &c. such

Aug. de Civ. dei l. 19. cap. 23.

Tert. in Apol. c. 2.

Tert. in Apol. c. 7. saith *Tertullian*; we Christians are counted the vilest of men for *Murdering* our own *Infants*, yea, and like old Satan, for *eating* them too. To this *Eusebius* adds another Calumny, that was spread abroad, and believed amongst the Nations, and that was this ὡς ἀθεμίτοις πρὸς μιξέσι καὶ ἀδελφαῖς μίξεσι, &c. We Christians are charged with *Incestuous copulations*, with our own Sisters and Mothers too.

That, which gave occasion to this foul, but undeserved reproach, was this; in those days the Servants of Christ, being sorely persecuted in all places, could not meet to serve their God in *publick*, and by *day*, without manifest hazard of their lives; and so were constrained, as *Pliny* informed the Emperor, to hold *Cœtus Antelucanos*, their holy Assemblies exceeding early, and in the dark. These obscure and private meetings, though held not of their own choice, but of mere necessity; and though designed for no other end, but the safety of their persons, whilest they worshipped God, did expose them to the censure of their Enemies, who, willing enough to believe all evil of them, did easily suspect them to be guilty of those horrid Crimes, which other wicked men, and perhaps they themselves, did often act in private and in the dark. And

And ſince the men of the Pagan World did, though very unjuſtly, believe the Primitive Chriſtians to be guilty of Adultery, Inceſt and Murder, even that of their own little ones; we cannot much wonder, that they ſhould think their utmoſt *Severity* towards them to be an Act of *Juſtice*, yea, and *Religion* too; becauſe even amongſt them, ſuch enormous Crimes were commonly puniſhed with Death, and do indeed deſerve it by the known Laws both of God and Men.

4. The Servants of Chriſt were thought to be the Cauſes of all thoſe Publick Calamities which befell the World, and ſo might well be judged unfit to live any longer in it.

And doubtleſs had thoſe former Charges been well proved againſt them, this laſt had been but a very rational Inference from them. For, whoſoever is an *Atheiſt* in point of *Religion*, a *Rebel* in point of *Government*, and a *Debauchee* in point of *Manners*, doth contribute a great deal towards the Ruine of that place where he reſides.

That the Primitive Christians were, and did so, was a thing believed among the Heathens. St. *Austin* saith of *Rome*, *Mala quæ Civitas illa pertulit, Christo imputant*: Whatever Evils hapned to that City, they imputed unto Christ. Nay, *Postquam esse in mundo Gens Christiana cœpit, terrarum Orbem periisse*, &c. So the Pagans in *Arnobius*; the whole World is almost ruin'd since Christianity came into it.

Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 1. c. 1.

Arnob. l. 1. p. 4.

What particular Calamities were imputed by the men of the Heathen World to the Servants of Christ, we learn from several Authors. *Non pluit Deus, non seminamus*; so speak the Heathens in St. *Austin*; there is no Rain, we cannot sow. What then? *Dic ad Christianos*: Go and thank the Christians for it. To this we may add that of *Tertullian*; *Si Tiberis ascendit ad Mœnia, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, &c.* If there happened either too much Rain, or too little; if there were any Famines, Pestilences, or Earthquakes, what then? *Christianos ad Leones.* Away with these Christians to the Lions. But why were they to blame? the Pagans in *Arnobius* give this Reason, *Christus ex Orbe Religiones expulit*; their Master had driven all Religions out of the World.

Aug. in Psal. 80.

Tert. in Apol. cap. 4.

Arnob. l. 2. p. 20.

So

So that the main Quarrel, which both *Jew* & *Pagan* had against Christ and his Servants, did arise from the different Interests of their Religions, the *Jew* adhering to *Moses*, the *Pagan* standing up for his *Number of Gods*, and the *Christian* opposing them both.

Upon which account, *Jew* and *Pagan* thinking their *own* Religions *right*, and the *Christians wrong*, did vigorously pursue them, the one with *Excommunications*, and both with *Death*. And this was judged, as the Text stiles it, λατρεία, a *Service* done, by the *Jew* to his *God*, and by the *Pagan* to his *Idols*. But what's all this to us, and the Occasion of this Day?

I. Consider we of what Concern it is, that we be not mistaken in Points of *Faith*, and Matters of Religion, lest perhaps we do *defend* an *Error*, and *oppose* the *Truths* of God.

Among those *many* kinds of *Worship*, which are in the *World*; amongst those too *numerous Sects* which are in the *Church*, there is but *One* that's right. And as this great *Variety* of Religions, each of which will pretend to be the true One, doth make it an *easie* matter to mistake; so doth the *Great Import* of the true Religion render such Mistakes

very dangerous too. For whosoever he be that takes up with a *False* Religion, supposing it to be a *True* one, doth run the hazard, if God be not the more merciful to his Ignorance, not only of *losing* that *Reward* which he looks for; but of committing those Crimes which may expose him to those *Punishments* which he little thinks of.

The true Religion of God is that which every man is bound not only to *adhere unto*, but to be *zealous for*; & accordingly we find with what affection the *Devout Turk* promotes the Doctrine of his *Mahomet*: we read with what vehemence the *Religious* Pagan hath contended for the service of his *Idols*; we are not ignorant with what warmth of Zeal the *pious Jew* hath stickled for the *Institutions* of his *Moses*; and we of the *Christian Church* do still lie under the Obligation of this Command, *Contend earnestly for the Faith.* We must do whatever lawfully we may, for the Establishment and Propagation of our Religion, even with our very utmost vigor.

Jude 3.

But if we shall be mistaken in the choice of our Religion, what horrible Actions will that Zeal of ours, which is required

from

from us, put us upon? St. *Paul* tells us, *'Tis good to be zealously affected alway in a good thing.* But Oh how mischievous is it to be zealous in a matter, especially a *Religion* that's *bad*. Gal. 4. 18.

We have great Instances of this in the Text: *They shall put you out of the Synagogues?* What *You* doth our Saviour mean? His *Apostles*, their immediate *Successors*, and other Primitive *Saints*, who proved his *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, and undoubtedly were the *best* of men. And what an injurious Action must it needs be to pass that dreadful Sentence of Excommunication upon such *Innocent* and *Holy* Persons, as if they had been the very *worst* of *Villains*? to treat the choicest Servants of God, as if they had been so many *incorrigible Rogues*, fit for nothing else but to be delivered up to the *Devils* power? to turn those very persons out of the Church, who were the most eminent Members of it; to shut them out of the Service of God who were the fittest to perform it?

Certainly, such Usage as this, being no way deserved, was bad enough; but yet there is something worse that is still behind; for 'tis added, *Every one that kills you*; To treat men of *spotless* Lives ὡς, λυμεῶναι, saith *Theophylact*,

last, as if they had been the most Pestilent *Bigots*, *Varlets*, and *Incendiaries* imaginable! To send such Persons out of that World, which had none better, nor perhaps so good, within it!

Doubtless, there could be no Action more unjust then this; but whence did it rise? What was it, that did perswade both *Jew* and *Pagan* to use the very utmost extremity towards such Persons, as really were the *Supporters* of the true *Church*, and the *Ornaments* of the *World*? The Text gives us this Account, *Every one that kills you, will think that he doth God Service.* Yea, behold here the *dismal Consequences* of a *mistaken Religion.* We have here the main Pillars of the Church excluded from it; here are Murders Committed upon the Persons of such Men, *Heb.* 11. *of whom the World was not worthy*, and all the Reason doth lie in this: *Every one that kills you, will think, that he doth God Service*, when *Truth* shall be esteemed *Error*, when the soundest Doctrine shall be counted Heresie, when the *neglect* or *contempt* of an *Idol* shall be stiled *Atheism*, when the *right* Religion shall be thought a *wrong* one, O what unwarrantable actions will *blind Zeal* put men upon! when the slaughter of Men, falsly supposed to be little better than *Brutes*, shall be judged an acceptable *Sacrifice* unto God, what religious

ligious Zealot will restrain his hands from Blood?

There is no Example of this in all our Bibles more eminent then that of our great St. *Paul*; of whom the Text saith. *He Breathed out Threatnings and Slaughters against the Disciples of the Lord*, and so again. *He made havock of the Church.* We have his own Confession. *I punished them oft in every Synagogue, and compelled them to Blaspheme.* But how came this Man, who proved so great a Saint, so miserably to Persecute the Poor, Unarmed, and Innocent Servants of Christ? He tells us, *I did it ignorantly*, he did all this mischief through a bare *mistake*; he was yet of an opinion, that the *Jewish* Religion was *right*, and the *Christian wrong*; and, upon that score, he Judged himself bound to defend the former, and oppose the later; for, so he Testified; *I verily thought with my self*, that *I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus.* This eminent person being *zealous* for his then Religion, but yet *mistaken* in it, did *oppose* that *Faith*, which, upon better Informations, he did afterwards *own*, preach, and defend. Such warm Affections had he yet for the Antiquated Worship of the Jewish Church, that he now *shed other* Men's Blood for the sake of the same Religion, for which at length he as readily *lost* his *own*.

Act. 9. 1.

Act. 8. 3.

1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Act. 26. 9.

And since we have such great and *sad examples* before us, let us take heed, lest we also do first *take* up any false Opinions, and then *think* our selves bound to *promote* them too. There are some amongst us, who, upon frivolous Pretences, quarrelling with the *Discipline* and *Service* of our Church, have departed from it; and as they have

withdrawn

withdrawn *themſelves*, ſo have they thought it their Obligation to ſeduce and take off *others*, even all they could: 'tis the unhappineſs of ſuch Men, that a *blind zeal*, which is their *own Sin*, ſhould likewiſe prove their *Neighbours Ruine*; that they, who *intend* a *kindneſs* to other perſons, ſhould even by their miſtaken *Charity deſtroy* them.

For 'tis very like, that many Promoters of *Schiſm* and *Faction* may *intend* well; but we muſt not truſt to the *Goodneſs* of our *Meanings*, but look to the *Soundneſs* of our *Underſtandings*. Tis not hard to believe, that when the Jew and the Gentle *Crucified* the *Son* of God, and *Murdered* his *Servants*, they *meant well* in both; nor can we doubt with any Charity, but when Zealous *Papiſts* and Religious *Pagans* burnt the *Martyrs*, they *intended* Good; the Text ſaith, that it ſhould be ſo. *Every one that kills you, will think that he doth God Service.* If ſo, then take we heed of all groſs *miſtakes* in the matters of our Religion; let us beware, leſt we be *corrupted* in our *Judgments*, either by the *Papiſt* on the one hand, or the *Sectary* on the other; let us not ſatisfy our ſelves, that our *Intentions* are *right*; but look we that our *Informations* be not *wrong*; for, if they be, what we do, as *Duty*, may prove our *Crime*; and, upon that Suppoſition, the more of *Zeal*, the more of *Sin*.

2. Conſider we what it is, that we muſt expect from thoſe Men, were we in their Power, who purſue us upon the *Intereſt* of *Religion*, or at leaſt pretend to do ſo.

'Tis certain that they of the *Roman* Church have as *grim* Reaſon, upon *Religious* accounts, and probably far *greater*, upon *Worldly* Conſiderations, to be as Zealous for their *Doctrine* and *Worſhip*, as ever the *Jew* or *Pagan* were for theirs. Nor is it to be diſputed,

but

but we of the *Reformed Churches* do differ from them of the *Roman* in ſome of the *ſame* Points, wherein the *Primitive Chriſtians* did both differ from the *Pagan* and the *Jew*.

'Tis not hard to demonſtrate, that we of the *Church* of *England* now are, in all the *Fundamental* Points of our Religion, what the *Apoſtles* and their Followers ever were. Nor is it difficult to prove, that they of the *Roman* Communion now are, in ſeveral matters, what the *Jews* and *Pagans* were. For, the great reſpect which they bear to their *written Traditions*, equalling their νόμον ἐν τύπῳ, their Law in the *Mouth* to that in the *Book*: Even this, together with the vaſt *multitude* of their *Ceremonies*, and ſuch Ceremonies as do render the ſervice of God rather *vain* than *venerable*, doth prove them ſomewhat like the *Jews*: onely whereas the *Jewiſh Rites*, being appointed by God, did *adorn* his Worſhip, and were *Parts* of it; theſe mens follies, invented by themſelves, do *corrupt* and ſpoil it.

Again, their publick *allowance* of *Fornication*, and taking Money for it, as if it were no ſin; their *adoration* of *Images*, their *invocation* of *Saints*, their doctrine of *Purgatory*, which was the Invention of *Plato*: All this doth teſtifie, that both in their *Religion*, and in their *Manners*, they are too like the *Pagans*. The truth is, the preſent Religion of the *Roman* Church is a mere *Miſcellany*, too like that of the *Turkiſh* Alcharon, as having in it ſomething of the *Pagan*, ſomething of the *Jew*, and ſomething of the *Chriſtian* too.

And as our Adverſaries do thus *reſemble* both *Jew* and *Pagan* in ſome matters of their *Religion*, ſo do they *match* them both, in their *zealous perſecution* of all ſuch as do oppoſe them. What kind of uſage the *Primitive* Chriſtians found from *Jews* and *Pagans*, we learn from the Text; and what kind of Treatments the *Proteſtant Churches* have found from the *Roman*, our own *Chronicles* do inform us; and that men of the *ſame Principles* would fain be at the *ſame ſport* again, we do not need a *Spirit* of *Prophecy*

to

to assure us. Let's view the Text once more, and see the Parallel.

1. The Text saith of the *Jew*, ἀποσυναγώγους ποιήσουσιν ὑμᾶς, They will put you out of the Synagogues, they will turn you out of their Churches; and that being done, they will count you, as *Publicans* and *Heathens*, even the *worst* of men.

And thus have the *Roman Jews* dealt with *us* and our *Progenitours*; they have *morally* driven us from them, by imposing upon us such *Conditions* of *Union*, as did oblige us to break either with *God* or *Them*. And when the Governours of our Church saw themselves necessitated to withdraw from their Communion, they have, by their *Ecclesiastical Censures*, condemned us for being *Separatists*, though they themselves have unavoidably made us so.

'Tis well known, what *Bulls* and *Interdicts* they have sent us, what *Anathema's* and *Curses* they have written against us in their Councils, what solemn *Excommunications* they de-

nounce againſt us yeer by yeer, they proclaim us *Schiſmaticks*, *Hereticks*, and vile *Apoſtates* from the Faith of Chriſt, and as ſuch do they treat us; and, by ſo doing, they fully teach the *Example* in the Text --- *They will put you out of the Synagogues.* --- This they have done over and over; and 'tis well for us of this Age and Nation, that they can yet do no more; 'tis well, that all this *Thunder* of ſo many Excommunications, which hath made ſuch a mighty *noiſe*, doth yet want a *killing Bolt*. We are obliged to the good Providence of God, that they have not yet found, in our days, and in our Church, what they ſtrangely long for, a fair opportunity to *melt* down their *leaden Seals*, and turn them into *Bullets*.

2. The Text ſaith of the *Jew* and *Pagan* both --- Πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας --- *Every one that kills you* --- The *Jews* excluded them out of their *Synagogues*, and both *Jews* and *Pagans* turned them out of the *world* too.

And have not the *Roman Jews* and *Pagans* dealt thus with *thouſands* of our Religion, and fain

fain would deal ſo with us too? Have they not ſeconded their *Excommunications* with the *Sword*, and their *Anathema's* with devouring *Flames*? Is it not the conſtant Doctrine of their Church, that Hereticks muſt be burnt, and who thoſe Hereticks are, they *themſelves* muſt be the *onely Judges*? If we ſhall but read over the Hiſtories of *England*, *Ireland*, *France*, *Germany*, and other places, we ſhall finde that they have made ſuch miſerable *ſlaughters* in the *reformed* Churches, that it may be juſtly doubted, whether *Rome-Pagan* or *Rome-Papal* have ſhed the *greater quantity* of Chriſtian-bloud. But why would they do it?

3ly. The Text gives us this reaſon: *Every one that kills you*, δόξει λατρείαν προσφέρειν, *will think that he doth God good ſervice.* It was from a *religious miſtake* that all this Bloud-ſhed did proceed.

The *Pagans* had not right apprehenſions of *God*, the *Jew* was deceived in his opinion of *Chriſt*; ſo *blinde* was the *Pagan*, that he thought his *falſe Gods* to be *true ones*; ſo

ſo *prejudiced* was the *Jew*, that he judged the *true Meſſias* to be a *falſe* one: which groſs Miſtake of theirs, did expoſe them to the commiſſion of that horrid Crime, wherewith the Text doth charge them---- *Every one that kills you*---To kill a man, that *affronted* his ſuppoſed *God*, the *Pagan* did not think it ſin; to kill a man, that *oppoſed* the legal *Worſhip* of their Church, the *Jews* did not think it Murther; no, they judg'd it, Ἔργον θεοσεβείας καὶ ἀρετῆς, a religious Work, and pleaſing unto God. ----- So *Theophylact.*

And ſuch Apprehenſions concerning *us* have they of the *Roman Church*, in which men bred up in the ignorance of *our Religion*, yea, and much of their *own* too, are taught to believe, that we of the *Proteſtant* Religion are mere *Apoſtates* from the *Faith* of Chriſt, that we are ſuch *Hereticks*, as deny the great Doctrines of the *Catholick Church*: And yet ſure we are, that they can never *overthrow our* Faith, nor *defend* their *own*, by more Arguments than one; I mean, that one which

which *hangeth* by their *ſides*; that one which they fetch, not from the *Library*, but the *Cutlers* Shop: they can never *confute* us any other way, than that in the Text--*Every one that kills you.* --- We have ſo much ſolid Reaſon on our ſides, that they can never be too hard for us, till either we *our ſelves* ſhall *loſe* our *brains*, or *they daſh* them out.

And that they may ſo do, O what Endeavours do they uſe! what Plots do they lay? what Expences are they at? They can fetch *Armadoes* from *Spain*, falſe Witneſſes from St. *Omers*, and a *Powder*-Treaſon even from *Hell* it ſelf. What pains do they take to corrupt ſuch *great* perſons, as are either *vitious* or *ignorant*? Nay, what *hazards* do they run? for, as things yet ſtand, they cannot attempt *our Lives*, without ſome danger of their *own*, and yet they will venture; but why all this? The Text gives us the beſt account: *They will think that they do God ſervice*, &c.

Certainly, they who, through the juſt Judge-

Judgment of God, are given up to ſuch ſtrong deluſions, as to think that *Murther* is rather their *Merit* than their *Crime*, muſt needs be dangerous men. Of all Villains in the world, the *Religious Villain* is far the worſt: for, whilſt every *common* Villain's Conſcience, who knows what he doth to be ſin, may juſtly *check* him; the *Religious* Villain's Conſcience, who commits a *ſin*, but thinks it *duty*, doth not onely *invite* him to it, but *applauds* and chears him in it.

'Tis the great unhappineſs of the Chriſtian Church, that there ſhould be any ſuch *miſtaken Zelots* in it, who think the *killing* of *men* to be a *ſerving* of *God*. But ſince the Divine Providence, for the *correction* of our *Vices*, or the *tryal* of our *Graces*, doth permit it ſo to be; ſince we have ſuch devout and *pious Blood-hounds* amongſt us, as count it a *religious* act to *deſtroy* our *Perſons*, and *ruine* our *Nation*, which they know to be both the *defence* and *glory* of the Reformed Churches, We may do well to conſider theſe three things.

First,

First, That we have very little Reaſon to Believe the preſent *Religion* of the *Roman* Church to be indeed the *Religion* of *Chriſt*.

Never did our Bleſſed Saviour Teach his Servants to Propagate his Religion by *Shedding Blood*; Never did his Apoſtles Teach their Succeſſors, either by *Doctrine* or *Example*, to Promote the Goſpel by *any Sword*, but that of the *Spirit* onely: I find indeed, that Chriſtianity is called by ſome Antient Authours, δόξα ἡ Κρατοῦσα, The *Prevailing* Doctrine; and the *Promoters* of it were accordingly ſtiled οἱ Κρατοῦντες, the *Conquerours*; But by what Weapons did they overcome? St. *Paul* Anſwers, *The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal.* They did not Convert the Heathen World with *Swords* and *Daggers*; They did not Enlighten the Underſtandings of Men with *Fire* and *Faggots*; ſuch Pagan Princes as would not turn to their Religion, they did not *Aſſaſſinate*, nor move their *Subjects* to *Rebell*. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.

No, the Religion of Christ hath in it such Properties as forbids all this: St. James tells us, What it is, 'tis *first Pure, and then Peaceable.* The Designs of Christianity is to make Men as more *Holy* towards their *God*, so more *Gentle*, Kind, and Tender-hearted towards their *Neighbours*, then all Man-kind besides: 'Tis one great work of the Gospel so to *Mollifie* and Soften the Hearts of Men, that the *Vulture* may become a *Dove*, and the *Woolf* a *Lamb.*

James 3. 17.

But so far is the *Roman* Religion from doing this, that it *makes* Men more *Merciless* then it *found* them: For we cannot doubt, but they, who have the Great unhappiness to be Born within that Church, do bring with them into the World the same *Natural Bowels* with other Men: but such is their Education, that they Learn more Cruelty from a Corrupted Religion, then from a Corrupted Nature. Even so much Cruelty, that when once they Act like *Zealous Papists*, they do even cease to be Men. And if so that Religion can be

be no Kin to the Religion of Christ, which instead of makeing *better*, doth make him *none*. But

Secondly, That we have abundant Reason to *prepare* our selves for the very worst of Sufferings.

The Scriptures tells us, That the Servants of God must expect wrongs and Injuries, not from *Prophane* Persons onely, but, which is worse, even from *Devout* Ones too. Wicked Men may pursue us from a *Principle* of *Irreligion*; And *Devout* Men may do as much from a *Blind* and ill-grounded *Zeal*. Of this latter sort are they in the Text; such Persons, as through *Mistakes* and Mis-informations, are of an Opinion, that it were a *Pious* work to *Destroy* us, and so thinks themselves *Obliged* to do it. This being our Case, we should fit our selves to endure whatever God may permit Men of rash and *Fiery Spirits*, Enflamed with *Zeal*, and Edged with *Religion*, to inflict upon us.

Now, that we may ſuffer, if need be, with that Chriſtian *Courage*, that becomes us, beſides our Begging the Aſſiſtances of that God, for whom we ſuffer: we are Concerned to do theſe *Two* Things more.

Firſt. 'Tis our Concern to *Acquaint* our ſelves thoroughly with the *Principles* of that *Religion* which we *Oppoſe*: and of that we *Adhere* unto.

'Tis a great thing to Suffer, ſo harſh to Fleſh and Blood, that no VViſe Man will do it, unleſs he ſee Good reaſon for it. And in our preſent Caſe, the onely reaſon muſt be, the *Badneſs* of the *Religion* which we *Renounce*, and the *Goodneſs* of that which we Defend. That the *Roman Religion* is ſtark *Nought*; That the *Reformed Religion* is the onely *Right* one, we muſt not barely *Believe* by an *Implicit Faith*, but be able to *prove* by ſuch ſollid *Reaſons*, as cannot fail us. 'Tis
1 *Theſ.* 5. 21. St. *Paul's* rule, *Prove all things*. All Matters both of *Faith* and *VVorſhip*: but why? and in Order to what muſt we Prove them?

them? The next VVords tells us: *Hold fast that which is Good.* 'Tis an Intimation, that in times of Perſecution, we ſhall never hold faſt the beſt Religion in the VVorld, if we do not prove it firſt, but take it up meerly upon truſt: So Treacherous is the Soul of Man, and ſo averſe from Suffering any thing for God, that when we are brought into any Extremity, our own Hearts may be apt to Diſcourage us from induring it, by raiſing in us ſuſpitions and Jealouſies about the Truth of that *Religion*, which as yet we never ſtrictly *Examined*, but *Embraced* and owned barely through *Cuſtom* and *Education*.

Search we then with the ſevereſt ſcrutiny into the *Principles* and *Practices* both of the *Roman Religion* and our *Own*: call we our ſelves to a ſtrict Account, *Why* we are *Proteſtants* rather than *Papiſts*: Let us Impartially try both *Religions* by the *Written Word* of God, by the *Judgement* of the *firſt* and Beſt general *Councels*, by the *Teſtimony* of the moſt *Early* Fathers, and by the known *Practiſes* of the *Primitive-Church*.

And

And when we ſhall find that all theſe are certainly on our ſide, we muſt be ſatisfied that we cannot do our GOD a greater ſervice, then by Oppoſing the ſuperſtitious *Innovations* of the Roman Church, by a *Reſolute Defending* of our own Religion, and if need be, a *Cheerful ſuffering* for it.

Sure I am, the *ſtricter ſcrutiny* we make, the *Better* ſhall we underſtand the *Excellency* of our *own* Faith, and the *Vanity* of *theirs*, in all Points, wherein they differ from us. We ſhall find upon juſt enquiry, that there is a ſtrange difference betwixt that *Religion*, which *makes* us ſufferers, and that which *deſerves*, that we ſhould ſo be. As there is a vaſt Diſproportion betwixt him, that doth baſely *Commit* a Murder; and him that doth Glorioufly *ſuffer Martyrdom*, ſo is there an equal Diſtinction betwixt the *Roman Religion*, which bids them *Kill*; and *Ours*, which bids us *dye*. And this is that which we muſt ſatisfie our ſelves about in order to our Couragious and Cheerful enduring thoſe Sufferings, which Men,

Conſcientiouſly

Conſcientiouſly Cruel, are preparing for us.

Secondly. 'Tis our Great Concern to Live with that *Innocence*, *Holineſs*, and *Vertue*, which well becomes the *Servants* of *Chriſt* and that *Religion*, which is both *Ours* and *His*.

It will be a Difficult task for any of us to Dye for our *Religion*, except in the mean time we ſhall *Live* according to it; for although the *Excellency* of our *Faith* may *Invite* us to ſuffer for it, yet the *Guilt* of a *Wicked* Life will *Deterr* us from it. Indeed, *Aquinas* tells us, that *Martyrdom* is a thing ſo *Meritorious*, that it procures a Pardon for all Crimes whatſoever; and yet methinks it ſhould be hard for any Man, even upon a *Religious* ſcore, cheerfully to leave *this* world, ſo long as he knows himſelf *Unfit* for a *Better*.

Upon which Conſideration, let us *Live* like the *Beſt* of *Men*, that we may Dye like the beſt of *Saints*; let us ſo order our whole Converſation, that the world may ſee,

that

that our Enemies Malice is Levelled not againſt our *Faults*, but our *Duties*: not againſt our *Evil Manners*, but our *Good Religion*; let our *Virtuous Actions* as much Condemn their *Allowed Debaucheries*, as the *Purity* of our *Church* doth Condemn the Groſs *Superſtitions* of theirs.

This is the way to make our Sufferings eaſie; For, would *We* but Frame our *Manners*, as our *Church* already hath done her *VVorſhip*, according to thoſe *Rules*, which our Saviour hath left for *Both*; if whilſt our *Adverſaries* do whatever they can to *Deſtroy* our Lives, *we* would make it *Our work* to reform and *mend* them; as we do not fear the *Strongeſt Arguments* invented by their moſt *Subtle* Heads, ſo neither need we Dread the *Keeneſt VVeapons* managed by their *Stouteſt Hands*; For, ſhould it be the pleaſure of Divine Providence to give us up to the will of theſe *Religious Butchers*, they would do us no great Injury by ſending us from this *Bad* world to a *Better* ſo much the ſooner.

VVherefore

Wherefore since we are designed for the slaughter, let us so prepare our selves, by an *holy life*, that we may die, not like *Swine* in the *Shambles*, but as *Lambs* before the *Altar*, that the pouring out of our *blood*, which will be *murder* on *their* sides, who *shed* it, may prove a *Martyrdom* on *our* part, who *lose* it; let us so frame both our *hearts*, and our *lives*, that our *persons* may be *offered* up to God, as indeed the *Choicest Sacrifices* should and must be, *unspotted without*, and *sound within*. And when once we have secured our selves of this, we may say of *our* Enemies, what *Socrates* did of *his* Ἀποκτεῖναί με δύνανται βλάψαι δὲ οὔ... they may *turn* us out of their *Synagogues*; they may *throw* us into our *graves*, but they cannot *hurt* us.

3. Let us endeavour, as to *prepare* for those sufferings, which our Enemies would fain bring upon us, so to *prevent* them too.

The way to do so, is to reconcile our selves, first to *our God*, by *quitting* our *vices*, and then to *our selves*, by quitting our *Divisions*. May we not say, *For the Divisions of* England *there are great thoughts of heart?* For, next to those *debaucheries*, whereby we *provoke* that holy God, who would otherwise *protect* us; there is no-

thing that can do us ſo much injury as thoſe *Differences* in Matters of Religion, whereby we *gratifie* thoſe wicked men, who would, but could not otherwiſe *deſtroy* us. Our mutual Animoſities have a *double* tendency towards our Ruine, as being both our *Crimes*, which make us the more *ſinful*; and our *Calamities*, which make us the more *impotent* and weak. For,

Were we one *entire* Body, we ſhould be a burden too *big* for our Enemies to throw us into the *flames*; and upon that ſcore, their buſineſs is to *untie* us firſt, that they may *undo* us next. To accompliſh this, they teach poor ſilly ſouls to quarrel with the *Diſcipline* of our *Church*, the uſe of our excellent *Liturgy*, and thoſe other *Rites*, which, in their *number*, are but *few*, and in their *nature innocent*.

But ſince, in order to our *Eternal Salvation*, we do *agree* in the *ſubſtantials* of our Faith: Why ſhould we, in order to our *Temporal deſtruction diſagree* about its *Circumſtances*?

Tell me, ſhall we at ſuch a time as this, ſtand and quarrel whether the Governour of our Church ſhall be called a *Presbyter* or a *Biſhop*? Whether the Communion-board ſhall be called a *Table*, or an *Altar*? Shall we diſ-

pute

pute about *bare Names*, when, by ſo doing, we may loſe the moſt *ſacred things*? Shall we ſtand debating, even at the Daggers point, whether a *Black Gown*, or a *White Surplice* doth better become the Worſhip of God, when our Adverſaries are endeavouring to change the colour of both into a *Scarlet Red*, and that with the *blood* of thoſe that wear them?

Methinks we ſhould never *divide* upon ſuch *ſlender grounds*, when our Enemies, for *diſmal ends*, do ſo cloſely *unite* againſt us. Do we not yet underſtand, that the *Jeſuits* are the men, who, under the notion of *Quakers* and *Anabaptiſts*, have broken our *Publick Congregations* into *Private Conventicles*? They are the men who would fain *crumble* us yet into *ſmaller fractions*, that ſo we might become the *fitter morſels* for their *Teeth*, and be devoured with the greater eaſe.

True it is, in all they do they *pretend* the ſervices of God, by reſtoring that which they falſly call the *Old Religion*. This is in their *Tongue*, but ſomething elſe is in their *Eye*; They well remember what *rich Revenues* they formerly had amongſt us, and would fain recover yet once again. To make us once more

their *Prey*, they ſeparate us from one another: They act like the *Huntſman*, who *ſevers* from the Flock that *fat Deer* which he fain would *kill*: And ſince we are ſo purſued, let us conſult *our ſafety*, as the wounded Deer doth *his*; and that is by *uniting* our ſelves *unto*, and keeping cloſe *within* the *common herd*; I mean, our *Publick Congregations*.

'Tis the great honour of this Royal City, that you have built ſo *many*, and ſo *ſtately* Temples. We that knew the *Old* Churches of *London*, may now juſtly look upon them as ſo many *Ancients*, but *worn* and *battered* pieces of Plate, *melted* down indeed through the *permiſſion of Heaven*, but by the *Malice* of *Hell*: But now, by the care and piety of good men ſo *Artificially* made up again, and ſo *curiouſly* burniſhed, that through the flames they have loſt nothing but the *droſs*, and do only *ſhine* ſo much the brighter.

But withall, to what end are theſe glorious Temples *built* and *beautified*, if our God may be worſhipped with as much *ſolemnity* in a *Country-Barn*, or a *City Coffee-houſe*, as in this and other *Churches*; which are ſet apart from *common uſes*, and for the ſervice of that *great* God,

for

for whom nothing can be too splendid and venerable.

But since these sacred structures are not only *restored*, but *bettered* too, let us unanimously meet to serve our God within them: Let not the *same* men, who are justly suspected to have *fired* us out of our *Old* Churches, be ever able to *tempt* and *flatter* us from our *New Ones*.

And as to matters of meer *Decency* and *Order*, which are a ground of our Divisions, it will become our *Modesty* to think our *Governours* wiser than our *selves*: 'Tis easie to believe, that they who stand on the *highest ground*, should *see* the *farthest*: 'Tis easie to think, that the *discerning Eye*, and the *judicious Brain*, should rather be found in them, who are the *Heads* of our Church, than in other men, who are as the *Hand*, the *Foot*, or some of those inferiour members, which God and Nature have designed for other uses.

Sure I am, 'tis our great Concern to put an end to our Divisions, remembring that we are but as *Glass* in the Casement, exposed to storms, and brittle at best; but if once *unsolder'd*, the more easily *shook* and broken: Let remember that the same Peace and Amity,

which

which the *Commands* of a *good God* have made our *Duty*, the *designs* of *ill men* have made our *Interest* too.

We use to count it a great security to this Island, that the kind Seas do interpose themselves as a Bulwark between us and other Nations, who might otherwise more easily annoy us. But alas! what safety will it be, that we are so *happily divided from* the whole *world* besides, if we are not as *happily united* within our *selves*?

But, were there once a blessed *Closure*; were all names of *Distinction* forgot amongst us; were the *Dissenter* as ready to own the *Bishop* for his *Father*, as we are to own the *Presbyter* for our *Brother*: Would but our *Conventiclers* once *empty* themselves into our *Churches*, and *honestly restore* what they have *unadvisedly withdrawn*; would *we* as firmly unite in order to our *preservation*, as our *Enemies* do in order to our *destruction*; then might we yet hope to see our *Crown flourish*, our *Church setled*, our *Religion established*, this great *City prosper*, our *Persons*, and our *Concerns*, secured from all the Attempts of those inhumane Villanies, who their Powder failing, they are still contriving *New* Engines to lay *us* in our *Graves*, our

Cities

Cities in *Ashes*, and the whole Kingdom in *Blood*.

Nor may we hope that they, whose very *Religion* doth make them *wicked*, will ever cease from these cursed Designs, so long as they are acted by the Commands and Counsels of that *Roman Juggler*, who, how vicious soever, being once seated in an honest man's Chair; I mean, St. *Peters*, doth immediately pretend to an *Infallibility*, as if that *Triple Crown*, when it first *adorns* his Head, must needs *Inspire* it too.

Upon which Considerations, give me leave to renew my request, which is only this—That we would joyn our *Hearts* & our *Hands*; and let those Hearts be *upright* with God, and those Hands *clean* in the sight of men. For if our lives prove *corrupt* and vicious, when these *Romish Blood-hounds* do pursue us, we shall surely give them the greater advantage by leaving any *Ill Scent* behind us.

FINIS.